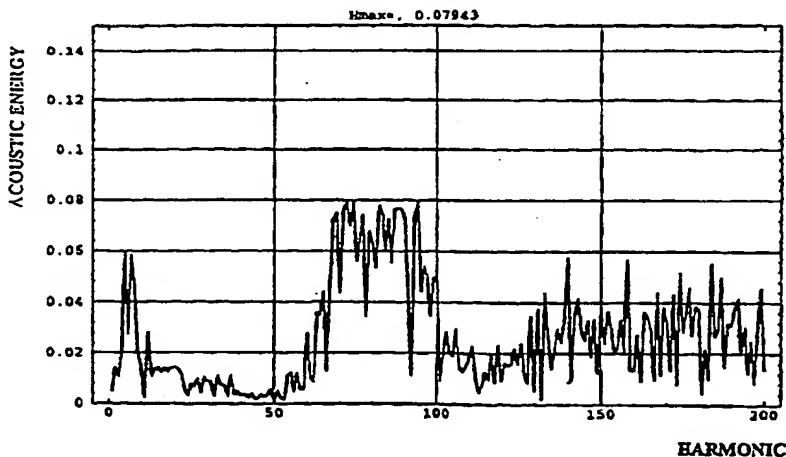




INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification ⁶ : B60C 11/00 // 113:00		A1	(11) International Publication Number: WO 97/09184
			(43) International Publication Date: 13 March 1997 (13.03.97)
(21) International Application Number: PCT/US96/13054 (22) International Filing Date: 13 August 1996 (13.08.96) (30) Priority Data: 08/523,708 5 September 1995 (05.09.95) US (71) Applicant: THE GOODYEAR TIRE & RUBBER COMPANY [US/US]; Patent Section - D/823, 1144 East Market Street, Akron, OH 44316-0001 (US). (72) Inventor: WESOLOWSKI, Piotr, Janusz; 78 Timothy Avenue, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44223 (US). (74) Agent: EASTERLING, Kathleen, M.; The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, Administrator International Patents, Patent Section - D/823, 1144 East Market Street, Akron, OH 44316-0001 (US).		(81) Designated States: AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BB, BG, BR, BY, CH, CN, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, GB, GE, HU, IL, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, UZ, VN, ARIPO patent (KE, LS, MW, SD, SZ, UG), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG). Published With international search report. Before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of the receipt of amendments.	
(54) Title: PNEUMATIC TIRE HAVING IMPROVED PITCH SEQUENCING			



(57) Abstract

The present invention relates to a pneumatic tire having a tread with a plurality of load-supporting elements placed above the circumference of the tire. The tread is characterized by a pitch sequence comprising (a) from 67 to 103 total pitches; (b) only four or five different pitch lengths; (c) a ratio of the longest pitch to the shortest pitch length not to exceed 1.58; (d) a ratio of the longer pitch length to the shorter pitch length of any two pitches which precede or follow each other not to exceed 1.43; (e) there being no instance in the pitch sequence where the shortest pitch length directly precedes or directly follows the longest pitch length; (f) there being a constant increment in pitch length in the four or five different pitch lengths as one progresses from the shortest pitch length to the longest pitch length.

FOR THE PURPOSES OF INFORMATION ONLY

Codes used to identify States party to the PCT on the front pages of pamphlets publishing international applications under the PCT.

AM	Armenia	GB	United Kingdom	MW	Malawi
AT	Austria	GE	Georgia	MX	Mexico
AU	Australia	GN	Guinea	NE	Niger
BB	Barbados	GR	Greece	NL	Netherlands
BE	Belgium	HU	Hungary	NO	Norway
BF	Burkina Faso	IE	Ireland	NZ	New Zealand
BG	Bulgaria	IT	Italy	PL	Poland
BJ	Benin	JP	Japan	PT	Portugal
BR	Brazil	KE	Kenya	RO	Romania
BY	Belarus	KG	Kyrgyzstan	RU	Russian Federation
CA	Canada	KP	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	SD	Sudan
CF	Central African Republic	KR	Republic of Korea	SE	Sweden
CG	Congo	KZ	Kazakhstan	SG	Singapore
CH	Switzerland	LI	Liechtenstein	SI	Slovenia
CI	Côte d'Ivoire	LK	Sri Lanka	SK	Slovakia
CM	Cameroon	LR	Liberia	SN	Senegal
CN	China	LT	Lithuania	SZ	Swaziland
CS	Czechoslovakia	LU	Luxembourg	TD	Chad
CZ	Czech Republic	LV	Latvia	TG	Togo
DE	Germany	MC	Monaco	TJ	Tajikistan
DK	Denmark	MD	Republic of Moldova	TT	Trinidad and Tobago
EE	Estonia	MG	Madagascar	UA	Ukraine
ES	Spain	ML	Mali	UG	Uganda
FI	Finland	MN	Mongolia	US	United States of America
FR	France	MR	Mauritania	UZ	Uzbekistan
GA	Gabon			VN	Viet Nam

PNEUMATIC TIRE HAVING IMPROVED PITCH SEQUENCINGBackground of the Invention

5 The present invention relates to a pneumatic tire, more particularly to a tread pattern for pneumatic tire.

As a tire travels upon a surface, there occurs a movement of air, creating an audible sound. For any given tread pattern, a certain amount of acoustic energy is produced. While two different tread patterns may produce the same amount of acoustic energy, the noise produced by each may have dramatically different effects on people. One tire may sound harsh and disagreeable and the other quite acceptable. The difference between the two sounds is in their frequency spectrum and may result in a different subjective audible reaction. The condition where the sound generated is dominated by a single frequency and its harmonics, i.e., a majority of the sound generated being concentrated into very small frequency range of the sound spectrum is undesirable. This situation is psychologically upsetting to a listener, creating an uneasy feeling. Additionally, besides being irritating, total sounds can be perceived at greater distances and require more sound-proofing material than do non-total sounds. If a given concentration of sound energy could be spread out over a wider range of frequency, it would reduce the enology or the undesirability of the sound.

30 Various methods have been suggested in the past to reduce objectionable noise generated by tires by spreading the energy produced over the frequency range. For example, U.S. Patents 4,327,792 and 4,474,223 disclose a method of spreading noise by load-supporting elements of a tire tread. This is accomplished by designing load-bearing elements in

accordance with a five-step procedure to determine the maximum number of repeating design cycles which may be used, selecting the maximum pitch ratio, determining the appropriate number of harmonic segments into which the tread can be divided, determining the size of each harmonic segment and the number of design cycles for each harmonic segment and lastly arranging the various design cycles in each of the harmonic segments so that the wave length of the predominant modulation frequency of the segment corresponds to the formula length of that segment.

Summary of the Invention

The present invention relates to a tire provided with a tread having a plurality of load-supporting elements placed above the circumference of the tire. The tread has a pitch sequence comprising:

- (a) from 67 to 105 total pitches;
- (b) only four or five different pitch lengths;
- (c) a ratio of the longest pitch length to the shortest pitch length not to exceed 1.58;
- (d) a ratio of the longer pitch length to the shorter pitch length of any two pitches which precede or follow each other not to exceed 1.43;
- (e) there being no instance in the pitch sequence where the shortest pitch length directly precedes or directly follows the longest pitch length; and
- (f) there being a constant increment in pitch length in the four or five different pitch lengths as one progresses from the shortest pitch length to the longest pitch length.

Detailed Description of the Drawings

Figure 1 is a graphical illustration of the Harmonic Analysis of the Impulse function for a tire

tread having 79 pitches made in accordance with the present invention and using the pitch sequence disclosed herein.

Figure 2 is a graphical illustration of the
5 Harmonic Analysis of the Impulse function for a tire tread having 79 pitches made in accordance with U.S. Patent 4,474,223.

Detailed Description of the Invention

10 As used herein and in the claims, the following terms are intended to mean:

"Pitch" also known as "design cycle" means a section of the tread in the circumferential direction which is repeated around the outer circumference of
15 the tire. Normally, a pitch contains a load-bearing element and an adjacent groove which separates adjoining load-bearing elements in a tire tread. However, the boundaries of a pitch in the circumferential direction may bisect a load-bearing
20 element or adjacent groove, depending on the point on the boundary in the axial direction. Even so, each pitch generally contains the total of at least one load-bearing element and at least one groove, but it may consist of two fractions which total one complete
25 element or groove.

"Pitch ratio" means the ratio of the longest design cycle length to the shortest design cycle length.

"Pitch sequence" means the particular arrangement
30 of different design cycle length segments around the full circumference of the tread.

"Pneumatic tire" means a laminated mechanical device of generally toroidal shape (usually an open torus) having beads, a carcass ply and a tread.

35 The pneumatic tires of the present invention have improved pitch sequencing. Use of these sequences in

tires result in improved subjective noise properties and are believed to result in reducing uneven tread wear.

5 The ratio of the longest pitch length to the shortest pitch length should not exceed 1.58. Preferably, the ratio ranges from 1.42 to 1.58.

The ratio of the longer pitch length to the shorter pitch length of any two pitches which precede or follow each other should not exceed 1.43.
10 Therefore, this pitch length ratio ranges from 1.0 to 1.43.

In the pitch sequences used in the present invention, the lowest indivisible integers used for pitch sequences having four pitch lengths are 7, 8, 9
15 and 10 and for the pitch sequences having five pitch lengths, the pitch ratios are 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11. There is a constant increment in pitch length in the four different pitch lengths and five different pitch lengths as one progresses from the shortest pitch
20 length to the longest pitch length. For example, for the pitch length ratio 7, 8, 9 and 10, there is a constant increment of 1.

There are nine pitch sequences which are preferred embodiments of the present invention. In
25 terms of this pitch ratios, the following sequences are disclosed. The sequences below are interpreted in terms of a closed loop (like a tire) and any pitch can initiate the sequence or terminate the sequence so long as the order of the sequence is maintained.

30 The first pitch sequence consists of 67 total pitches. The pitch sequence is as follows:

7	9	8	8	9	10	11	9	10	7
10	7	7	7	7	7	9	10	10	8
11	10	11	8	8	8	7	9	8	10

7	7	7	9	8	9	10	10	8	8
7	7	10	11	9	7	7	8	7	7
10	9	8	10	9	11	8	8	8	7
9	10	11	8	8	7	10			

5 The second preferred pitch sequence has a total of 69 pitches and is as follows:

10	10	9	11	9	7	7	7	8	10
10	8	7	7	7	8	9	9	10	10
7	7	8	9	9	11	8	7	8	7
10	7	8	8	10	7	7	10	9	9
8	9	8	8	9	8	7	8	7	10
10	9	8	8	9	11	9	9	8	8
8	9	7	7	7	9	10	10	9	

15 The third preferred pitch sequence consists of 71 total pitches and is as follows:

8	8	10	7	8	7	10	8	11	10
10	9	8	7	7	7	8	8	9	11
8	9	7	7	9	10	10	8	7	8
7	7	7	10	8	8	9	7	10	6
20	8	11	9	9	9	7	8	8	7
8	9	8	10	9	10	11	10	10	7
8	9	7	7	7	7	8	9	9	9

11.

25 The fourth preferred pitch sequence consists of 73 total pitches and is as follows:

9	8	7	8	9	9	9	10	9	8
8	8	8	8	7	7	7	9	8	9

	10	9	7	7	8	8	9	9	9	9
	10	10	8	8	8	7	7	8	9	9
	7	9	9	10	9	10	10	10	10	8
	7	7	8	7	7	7	8	10	9	8
5	9	7	9	10	10	10	8	7	7	7
	7	8	10.							

The fifth preferred pitch sequence consists of 76 total pitches and is as follows:

	7	7	8	8	8	11	9	10	10	9
10	9	11	8	7	8	8	8	9	11	10
	9	8	7	8	8	9	8	7	10	9
	11	10	9	8	7	8	8	9	10	8
	10	9	7	8	7	7	7	8	10	8
	11	9	11	9	10	8	8	8	7	7
15	8	9	11	8	10	7	8	9	11	11
	10	9	8	7	7	7.				

The sixth preferred pitch sequence consists of 79 total pitches and is as follows:

	8	10	9	11	9	10	8	7	7	8
20	9	9	10	11	9	8	7	8	8	7
	9	8	10	9	11	8	8	7	7	7
	7	8	9	9	10	10	10	10	11	8
	7	8	9	8	9	7	10	10	7	8
	8	8	11	11	10	9	9	8	8	7
25	7	7	7	8	8	11	9	8	10	11
	10	10	9	8	7	7	7	8	9.	

- 7 -

The seventh preferred pitch sequence consists of 85 total pitches and is as follows:

	8	7	10	9	9	8	8	7	8	7
	9	8	10	9	9	8	8	7	9	10
5	8	11	9	7	8	8	7	8	9	10
	10	10	10	9	8	8	8	8	10	7
	9	9	9	9	8	10	9	11	8	8
	7	7	7	7	8	9	8	9	9	11
	10	9	8	9	9	7	7	8	7	8
10	8	9	10	9	11	10	9	11	10	9
	8	7	7	7	7					

The eighth preferred pitch sequence consists of 98 total pitches and is as follows:

	11	9	10	9	8	8	9	10	10	8
15	7	7	7	8	9	9	9	9	9	8
	7	7	7	9	11	9	8	8	10	8
	8	8	8	10	9	8	7	7	7	8
	8	11	10	9	11	9	9	9	7	7
	8	10	10	11	8	8	9	8	9	10
20	9	8	7	7	8	8	7	8	8	8
	10	10	9	10	9	8	7	8	9	10
	11	10	10	8	7	7	8	9	10	10
	9	9	7	8	7	8	8	9		

The ninth preferred pitch sequence consists of 103 total pitches and is as follows:

	10	8	11	8	9	10	9	10	9	8
	8	7	7	7	7	8	10	9	10	8

	9	9	10	9	9	7	7	8	8	7
	7	8	9	8	8	9	8	9	10	10
	10	10	11	8	7	7	7	7	8	7
	9	11	9	7	8	8	8	7	10	8
5	9	11	9	7	7	7	9	9	8	7
	8	9	10	9	8	10	8	7	8	9
	8	7	7	8	9	8	9	10	8	7
	8	7	8	10	10	9	9	11	8	8
	8	7	8							

10 The tires of the present invention may be for passenger vehicles, multi-purpose vehicles, light truck and medium truck.

According to the present invention, what determines the individual design cycles length on a given tire are the requirements of (a) there being only from 67 to 103 total pitches, (b) only four or five different pitch lengths, (c) the specific pitch sequence, (d) the four or five design cycle length ratios and (e) the known outer circumference of the tire. To determine how long each design cycle would be for a tire of a given outer circumference, one takes the sum of all the integers in the pitch sequence expressed in terms of ratios. For example, for the above 67 pitch sequence, the sum would be 574 (7 x 19 + 8 x 17 + 9 x 11 + 10 x 14 + 11 x 6). For a tire of the size P195/65R15, the outer circumference would be 2001 mm. If one divides the outer circumference 2001 mm by 574, one gets 3.486. One takes this number 3.486 and multiplies it by 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 to yield the respective pitch lengths, 24.40, 27.89, 31.37, 34.86 and 38.35.

Example 1

Computer simulation tests have been performed comparing the Harmonic Analysis of the Impulse function of tire treads with pitch sequences arranged according to the present invention versus pitch sequences according to U.S. Patent 4,474,223.

Figure 1 is a graphical illustration of the Harmonic Analysis of the Impulse function using the pitch sequence consisting of 79 individual pitches which are as follows:

	8	10	9	11	9	10	8	7	7	8
	9	9	10	11	9	8	7	8	8	7
	9	8	10	9	11	8	8	7	7	7
	7	8	9	9	10	10	10	10	11	8
15	7	8	9	8	9	7	10	10	7	8
	8	8	11	11	10	9	9	8	8	7
	7	7	7	8	8	11	9	8	10	11
	10	10	9	8	7	7	7	8	9.	

Figure 2 is a graphical illustration of the Harmonic analysis of the Impulse function using a pitch sequence consisting of 79 individual pitches in accordance with U.S. Patent 4,474,223 and which are as follows:

	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	9	9
25	9	9	9	9	9	9	11	11	11	11
	11	11	11	11	9	9	9	7	7	7
	7	7	7	9	9	9	9	9	9	11
	11	11	11	11	11	9	9	9	7	7
	7	7	9	9	9	9	11	11	11	11
30	9	9	7	7	7	7	7	9	9	9
	9	9	11	11	11	11	11	9	9.	

In comparing the Figures 1 and 2, it is seen that the Fourier spectrum of the impulse function for the tire tread where the pitch sequence is arranged according to the current invention (Figure 1) has flatter harmonics components than the pitch sequence in Figure 2. The flatter harmonics components translate to reduced tire noise as the tire contacts the road surface. The quality of the calculated Fourier spectrum can be also expressed by a maximum Normalized Amplitude. It is clearly visible from comparison of Figures 1 versus 2 that the maximum Normalized Amplitude calculated from pitch sequence(s) arranged according to the present invention are lower than those arranged in accordance to the U.S. Patent 4,474,223. Accordingly, it has been determined that a tire having pitches arranged according to the current invention has a reduction in tread noise as the tire contacts the road surface. In particular, there is a reduction of the maximum amplitude in 200 harmonic spectrum by more than 20 percent.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A tire provided with a tread having a plurality of load-supporting elements placed about the circumference of said tire, said tread having a pitch sequence characterized by:
 - (a) from 67 to 103 total pitches;
 - (b) only four or five different pitch lengths;
 - (c) a ratio of the longest pitch length to the shortest pitch length not to exceed 1.58;
 - (d) a ratio of the longer pitch length to the shorter pitch length of any two pitch which precede or follow each other not to exceed 1.43;
 - (e) there being no instance in the pitch sequence where the shortest pitch length directly precedes or directly follows the longest pitch length; and
 - (f) there being a constant increment in pitch length in the four or five different pitch lengths as one progresses from the shortest pitch length to the longest pitch length.

2. The tire of claim 1 characterized in that the pitch sequence consists of 67 total pitches and consisting of

7	9	8	8	9	10	11	9	10	7
10	7	7	7	7	7	9	10	10	8
11	10	11	8	8	8	7	9	8	10
7	7	7	9	8	9	10	10	8	8
7	7	10	11	9	7	7	8	7	7
10	9	8	10	9	11	8	8	8	7
9	10	11	8	8	7	10.			

3. The tire of claim 1 characterized in that the pitch sequence consists of 69 total pitches and consisting of

	10	10	9	11	9	7	7	7	8	10
	10	8	7	7	7	8	9	9	10	10
	7	7	8	9	9	11	8	7	8	7
	7	8	8	10	7	7	10	9	9	11
5	8	9	8	8	9	8	7	8	7	10
	10	9	8	8	9	11	9	9	8	8
	8	9	7	7	7	9	10	10	9	

4. The tire of claim 1 characterized in that the pitch sequence consists of 71 total pitches and consisting of

	8	8	10	7	8	7	10	8	11	10
	10	9	8	7	7	7	8	8	9	11
	8	9	7	7	9	10	10	8	7	8
15	7	7	7	10	8	8	9	7	10	8
	8	11	9	9	9	7	8	8	8	7
	8	9	8	10	9	10	11	10	10	7
	8	9	7	7	7	7	8	9	9	9
	11.									

20

5. The tire of claim 1 characterized in that the pitch sequence consists of 73 total pitches and consisting of

	9	8	7	8	9	9	9	10	9	8
25	8	8	8	8	7	7	7	9	8	9
	10	9	7	7	8	8	9	9	9	9
	10	10	8	8	8	7	7	8	9	9
	7	9	9	10	9	10	10	10	10	8
	7	7	8	7	7	7	8	10	9	8
30	9	7	9	10	10	10	8	7	7	7
	7	8	10.							

6. The tire of claim 1 characterized in that the pitch sequence consists of 76 total pitches and consisting of

35	7	7	8	8	8	11	9	10	10	9
----	---	---	---	---	---	----	---	----	----	---

- 13 -

9 11 8 7 8 8 8 9 11 10
 9 8 7 8 8 9 8 7 10 9
 11 10 9 8 7 8 8 9 10 8
 10 9 7 8 7 7 7 8 10 8
 5 11 9 11 9 10 8 8 8 7 7
 8 9 11 8 10 7 8 9 11 11
 10 9 8 7 7 7

7. The tire of claim 1 characterized in that
 10 the pitch sequence consists of 79 total pitches and
 consisting of

8 10 9 11 9 10 8 7 7 8
 9 9 10 11 9 8 7 8 8 7
 9 8 10 9 11 8 8 7 7 7
 15 7 8 9 9 10 10 10 10 11 8
 7 8 9 8 9 7 10 10 7 8
 8 8 11 11 10 9 9 8 8 7
 7 7 7 8 8 11 9 8 10 11
 10 10 9 8 7 7 7 8 9

20

8. The tire of claim 1 characterized in that
 the pitch sequence consists of 85 total pitches and
 consisting of

8 7 10 9 9 8 8 7 8 7
 25 9 8 10 9 9 8 8 7 9 10
 8 11 9 7 8 8 7 8 9 10
 10 10 10 9 8 8 8 8 10 7
 9 9 9 9 8 10 9 11 8 8
 7 7 7 7 8 9 8 9 9 11
 30 10 9 8 9 9 7 7 8 7 8
 8 9 10 9 11 10 9 11 10 9
 8 7 7 7 7

9. The tire of claim 1 characterized in that the pitch sequence consists of 98 total pitches and consisting of

	11	9	10	9	8	8	9	10	10	8
5	7	7	7	8	9	9	9	9	9	8
	7	7	7	9	11	9	8	8	10	8
	8	8	8	10	9	8	7	7	7	8
	8	11	10	9	11	9	9	9	7	7
	8	10	10	11	8	8	9	8	9	10
10	9	8	7	7	8	8	7	8	8	8
	10	10	9	10	9	8	7	8	9	10
	11	10	10	8	7	7	8	9	10	10
	9	9	7	8	7	8	8	9.		

15 10. The tire of claim 1 characterized in that the pitch sequence consists of 103 total pitches and consisting of

	10	8	11	8	9	10	9	10	9	8
	8	7	7	7	7	8	10	9	10	8
20	9	9	10	9	9	7	7	8	8	7
	7	8	9	8	8	9	8	9	10	10
	10	10	11	8	7	7	7	7	8	7
	9	11	9	7	8	8	8	7	10	8
	9	11	9	7	7	7	9	9	8	7
25	8	9	10	9	8	10	8	7	8	9
	8	7	7	8	9	8	9	10	8	7
	8	7	8	10	10	9	9	11	8	8
	8	7	8.							

30 11. The tire of claim 1 characterized in that the ratio of the longest pitch to the shortest pitch length ranges from 1.42 to 1.58.

35 12. The tire of claim 1 characterized in that the tire is for a passenger vehicle.

13. The tire of claim 1 characterized in that the tire is for a multi-purpose vehicle.

14. The tire of claim 1 characterized in that
5 the tire is for a light truck.

15. The tire of claim 1 characterized in that the tire is for a medium truck.

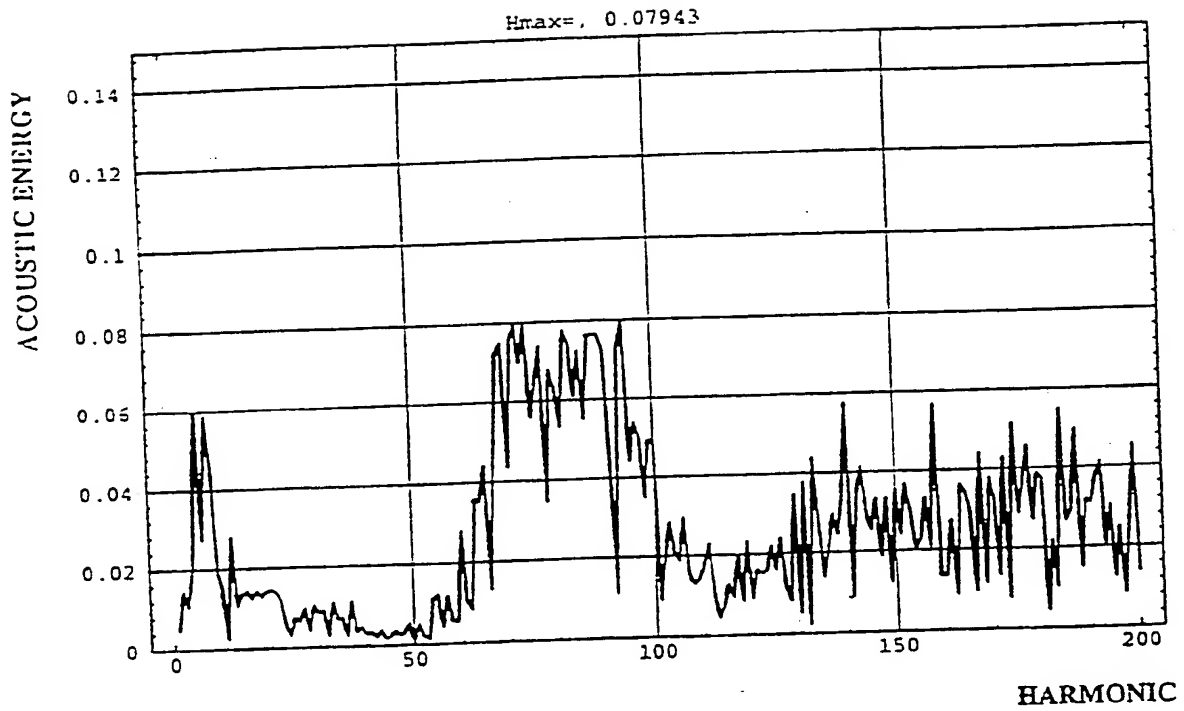


FIG-1

SUBSTITUTE SHEET (RULE 26)

2/2

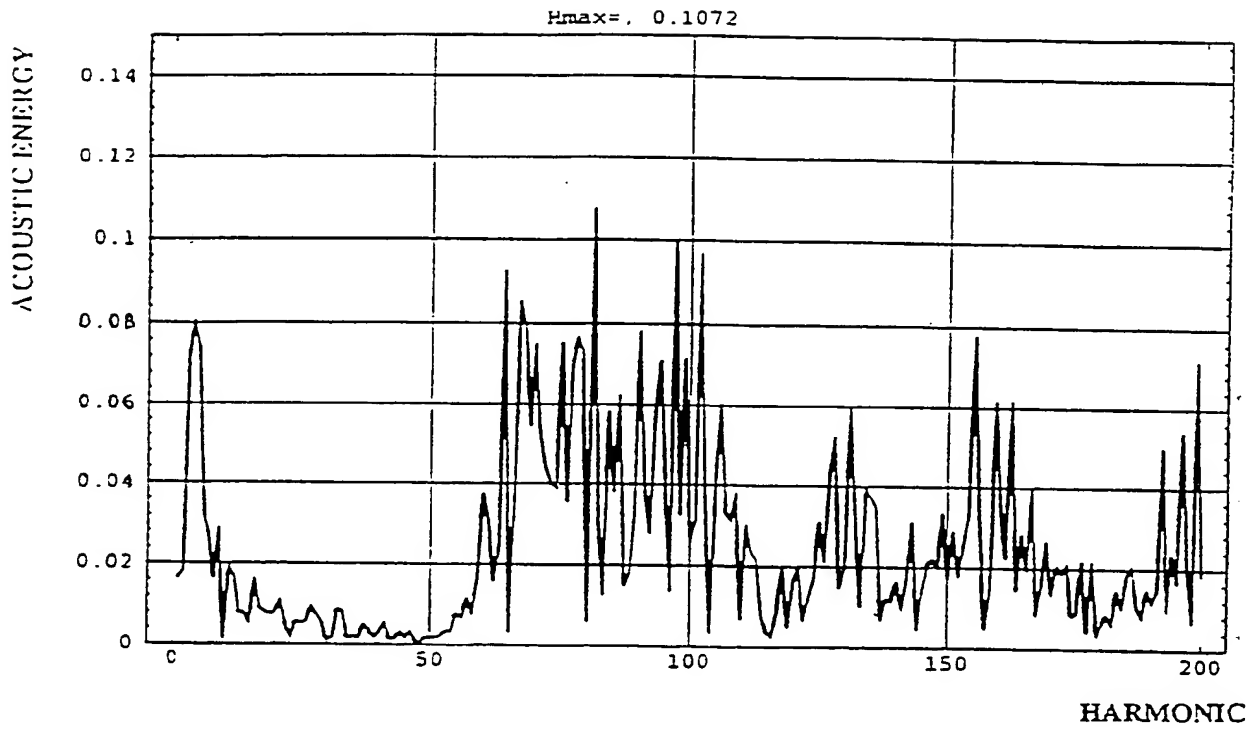


FIG-2

SUBSTITUTE SHEET (RULE 26)

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Inter. Appl. Application No
PCT/US 96/13054

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 6 B60C11/00 //B60C113:00

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
IPC 6 B60C

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US,A,5 240 054 (KOGURE TOMOHIKO) 31 August 1993 see column 5 - column 8; tables 1,2	1,11-15
X	US,A,2 878 852 (LIPPMANN ET AL.) 24 March 1959 see claims; figures	1
A	US,A,5 383 506 (KOGURE TOMOHIKO) 24 January 1995 see claims; example	1

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

* Special categories of cited documents :

- * "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- * "E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
- * "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
- * "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- * "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

* "T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

* "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

* "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.

* "&" document member of the same patent family

2

Date of the actual completion of the international search

28 November 1996

Date of mailing of the international search report

14.01.97

Name and mailing address of the ISA

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel. (+ 31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl,
Fax (+ 31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Baradat, J-L

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/US 96/13054

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US-A-5240054	31-08-93	JP-A- 1285408	16-11-89
US-A-2878852	24-03-59	NONE	
US-A-5383506	24-01-95	JP-A- 1285407	16-11-89

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)